

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is in response to the Office Action dated January 15, 2003. Therein, the Examiner seemed to have misplaced the "Version with Markings to show changes made" filed in the originally Preliminary Amendment of April 4, 2001. Applicant submits with this Amendment, the entire Preliminary Amendment dated April 4, 2001 for the Examiner's benefit.

The Examiner objected to the numbering of Claims 18 and 19. Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's changing of these claims to Claims 17 and 18, respectively. Applicant apologizes for any confusion caused by the numbering of these claims.

The Examiner objected to the Drawings, specifically formal drawings of Figures 10-13. It is noted that in Figure 10, elements 100, 150, 151 and 152 are specifically identified. Accordingly, Applicant traverses this particular objection to the Drawings.

Claims 2, 3, 6 and 9 were not rejected over any of the art. Accordingly, other than a potential double patenting rejection, Applicant has amended Claims 2, 3, 6, and 7 to place them in independent form as compared to original Claims 2, 3, 6, and 9. Therefore, it is suggested by Applicant that no further art rejections control these claims.

Claims 1, 9 and 14 have been cancelled.

Certain of the claims (1-9, 15 and 17-18) have been rejected under the obviousness-type double patenting. Applicant is more than willing to submit a Terminal Disclaimer once it is determined that that is the only objection to the claims.

There is some confusion over the status of Claim 16. It appears to not have been rejected over any of the art, and yet on the cover page of the most recently filed Office Action the Examiner indicates that it is rejected. It is possible that Claim 16 has been rejected under the obviousness-type double patenting statute. If so, Applicant's remarks with respect to a Terminal

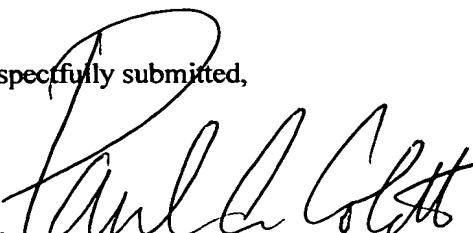
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Disclaimer would similarly apply to Claim 16. Applicant requests that the Examiner clarify the status of Claim 16.

Thus, all remaining claims, 2-8, 10-13, and 15-18 are believed to be allowable over the art. An indication of their allowability is respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page(s) is/are captioned "Version with markings to show changes made".

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

Page 1, line 9, after "filed February 24, 1999," please insert -- now U.S. Patent 6,258,116 --.

Page 1, line 10, after "February 24, 1998" please insert -- now U.S. Patent No 6,017,363 --.

Page 1, line 13, after "1997" please insert -- now U.S. Patent 5,938,682 --.

In the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 1, 9 and 14.

Please amend the claims as follows:

2. (Amended) A bifurcated stent comprising:

 a proximal tubular section;

 a first distal tubular section, said first distal tubular section connected to said proximal section by connector members; and

 a second distal tubular section, said first and second distal tubular sections welded together at their proximal ends;

wherein the weld is a spot weld formed between a dowel and a hole.

3. (Amended) A bifurcated stent comprising:

 a proximal tubular section;

 a first distal tubular section, said first distal tubular section connected to said proximal section by connector members; and

 a second distal tubular section, said first and second distal tubular sections welded together at their proximal ends;

wherein the connector members are continuously placed around the circumference of the first distal section.

6. (Amended) A bifurcated stent comprising:

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a proximal tubular section;

a first distal tubular section, said first distal tubular section connected to said proximal section by connector members; and

a second distal tubular section, said first and second distal tubular sections welded together at their proximal ends;

wherein said distal end a proximal sections are expandable to different diameters.

7. (Twice Amended) A stent comprising a first cylindrical form and a second cylindrical form connected thereto;

said second cylindrical form placed alongside a wall portion of the first cylindrical form and forming a connector thereat so that the stent forms a "Y"-shaped opening through the interior portion of the stent without overlap; and

said stent having a welded connection at the connection between said first and second cylindrical forms;

wherein said welded connection is accomplished around the entire circumference of said second cylindrical form.